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*Mr. Kirkland's Sermon,*

AT THE

ORDINATION OF MR. PIPON.

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A  
*S E R M O N,*

P R E A C H E D

*AT TAUNTON,*

JANUARY 15, 1800;

AT THE

O R D I N A T I O N

O F

*Rev. JOHN PIPON.*

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*Br JOHN THORNTON KIRKLAND,* *H*

Minister of the New South Church—*Boston.*

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1800







1 CORINTHIANS, XVI. 10.

NOW IF TIMOTHEUS COME, SEE THAT HE MAY BE WITH  
YOU WITHOUT FEAR ; FOR HE WORKETH THE WORK  
OF THE LORD.

**T**HE relation of minister and people being now to commence, a contemplation of some of the duties, rights, and expectations which it creates, can neither be unseasonable nor unedifying. To the former it will present a prospect of what he must do and suffer ; to the latter of what they may expect and claim : and by the divine blessing may tend to make him humble, circumspect, and diligent ; and them serious, affectionate, and respectful.

“ Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear” : let him not feel a distressing fear of any evil disposition or conduct in you ; or of any of those difficulties and discouragements which may impede and frustrate his exertions for your spiritual welfare ; “ for he worketh the work of the Lord” ; he sustains the office and character of a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ ; and he needs and de-

mands every encouragement and assistance from you, in a work so important, so sacred, and arduous.

IN conformity to the text, and the occasion, having

FIRST, Surveyed some leading duties and qualifications of a christian minister, we shall

SECONDLY, Explain and enforce the exhortation to people, to see that their minister “be with them without fear”.

IN the FIRST place, we survey some leading duties and qualifications of a christian minister. In the text he is described in general terms, as one who laboreth in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. This work is various and extensive. The first branch of this work is INSTRUCTION. What reason and revelation teach, respecting the nature, origin, and destiny of man, must be explained and inculcated by the pastor, who will feed his people with knowledge and understanding. If nature is the work and reason the gift of God, such a pastor will employ all the arguments and motives, which can be drawn from both these sources, in favor of religion and virtue. The christian teacher must lay open the evidences of the divine authority of the scriptures; that the unbelieving may be convinced, the wavering determined, and the faithful confirmed; taking care, not to discredit self evident truths, by attempting to prove them; not to injure a good cause by a weak defence, and not to raise objections for the sake of answering them.

BUT the evidences of revelation are displayed for the sake of its contents. A great business of the minister is to explain and inculcate the DOCTRINES of the scriptures. Whatever they clearly teach, or require us to infer, respecting God and man, Christ and the Holy Spirit; the terms of pardon and acceptance, and the sanctions of the gospel, the joys of heaven, and the pains of hell, are topics for the labored and frequent discussion of the christian minister. In communicating his views of the christian doctrines, his judgment and conscience may dictate some respect to the prejudices of his hearers, whilst he must tremble at the thought of suppressing, what he deems fundamental truth or very important truth, from the fear of man; regardless of the consequences of plainness of speech upon his popularity; and indifferent, whether he be denounced as a heretic, or celebrated as an orthodox preacher.

SINCE, however, the end of faith is practice; and all the doctrines and sanctions of christianity are designed to make us good men, his greatest stress will be laid on evangelical MORALITY. He will give continual and earnest instructions upon practical religion; by which is meant, not an exterior decency of manners, but holiness of heart and life; a consecration of the affections and actions to God. He is to paint virtue in all its charms, and vice in all its deformity: to descend to all the particular duties, belonging to the va-



riety of characters, situations, ages, employments, dispositions, and temptations among his people : endeavouring, in explaining moral precepts, to avoid licentiousness on the one hand, and severity on the other : aiming to master the heart ; to detect all the artifices and disguises of sin, to expose the reigning and fashionable vices ; and to show to every man a picture of himself. This serious and practical, is far more difficult, than doctrinal, metaphysical, and polemical preaching ; yet he must persist in it, though some speculative divines or laymen, may deny him the praise of ingenuity, for inculcating duty, instead of discussing points ; though he be spurned by zealots as a legal preacher, or a heathen moralist ; or though many be offended, with what they consider rigorous lessons, and harsh reproofs. The christian minister is to embrace all proper opportunities of giving instruction in private CONVERSATIONS ; and in CATECHISING where his people will send their children ; while the principal part of his work is to be done in public discourses. In the composition and delivery of these discourses, how careful must he be to have a predominant regard to the spiritual benefit of his hearers, aiming, not to gain applause, but to do good ; not to entertain the fancy and interest the passions ; but to enlighten the judgment, and to warm the heart ? Then will his delivery be without affectation, his style free-like, from a false glare of eloquence, and an insipid coldness ;



and his whole manner of address, simple, earnest, and persuasive.

THE time will not allow us to be particular on a second class of duties belonging to the christian minister, which consists in leading in the public devotions, in administering the ordinances, and in doing a certain part of the government and discipline of the church.

WE proceed to a THIRD most delicate and important part of his office, which consists in adapting his preaching and conduct to individuals, according to the diversity of their characters and circumstances. He is expected to be ready as opportunity offers, to instruct the ignorant, counsel the perplexed, and comfort the afflicted; the tempted he must warn and fortify; the gainfaying confute; the offending reprove, and the hardened rebuke, as circumstances allow: and to the tender and relenting speak the peace and consolation of the gospel. He must seat himself by the sick bed; and whilst he feels for the diseased body, feel more sensibly for the wounded mind, and the immortal soul; and to him it belongs to improve the softness of heart, produced by affliction, to make good impressions. The young are to engage his special attention; when he remembers the command of the great Shepherd, "to feed his lambs" as well as his sheep; and reflects that youth is the seed time for eternity.

MANY of these duties to individuals can indeed be

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performed with less advantage by the minister, than by other christians ; from the difficulty he is under of a sufficient knowledge of facts and characters ; his fewer opportunities of access, and the consequent mischief, resulting from mistaken ideas, and ill adapted modes of address. It belongs to you private christians, “ to provoke unto love and to good works” ; and it is a monstrous and absurd idea, that these offices are peculiar to the ministerial office.

It will be in vain, however, that the minister preach, pray, administer ordinances, visit the sick, and give instruction and admonition, if the general tenor of his conversation and practice, be not worthy of the gospel.—Hence

FOURTHLY, It is his indispensable duty to set a good example. “ Be thou an example of the believers in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” He will not give up his essential right of freedom of action in compliance with every prejudice and humour ; yet, is there a case in which it is doubtful where the right ends and the bad begins ? it is expected he make all the judicious and candid sensible, that he is within the disputed limit. Sooner than be thought to offend against temperance, he will be abstemious ; against candor, suppress even innocent remarks upon character ; against decent gravity, avoid freedoms in themselves harmless.

WE have sketched some of the leading duties of the christian minister, which arise from the nature and design of the office, and the requirements of the gospel. Every one must be sensible, that to the acceptable and useful discharge of them various qualifications of head and heart are necessary. A christian minister should be

1. A good general as well as theological scholar. Among the branches of knowledge with which it is important he should be acquainted, are logic, that he may know the rules of right reasoning; rhetoric, that he may have the art of adapting a discourse to its right end; natural theology, which comprises what reason can prove respecting the deity, and a future state; moral philosophy, which teaches the nature and grounds of moral obligation; and true metaphysick, which explains the powers and operations of the human mind. It is desirable that he should have some acquaintance with history, to ascertain what man has been, and see the conduct of Providence; with those works of fiction, which unfold the passions of the heart; and with life and manners, that he may know human nature, as it appears in his own times and situation. Having observed what men most wish and esteem, and most avoid and condemn, by what avenues vice insinuates itself into the heart, and by what methods of application the attention of the mind is engaged; having accurately observed the peculiar tempers and capacities of the individuals to whom he is to address himself; above all, having ex-



amined himself, that by himself he may judge of others, he will be under advantages to apply his religious and moral knowledge to the understandings and hearts of men with happy effect. For this knowledge is the proper science of a minister. The sacred scriptures must be his principal and constant study. That he may ascertain their scope and end, their doctrines and requirements, given to us without the arrangement and elucidation of system, scattered as they are through various books of various authors of various periods, he will need to search into the customs, manners, and phraseology of the ages and countries in which they were written, and to be acquainted with the original languages, and with the rules of just criticism. If he store his mind with a variety of moral and divine sentiments; by conversing much with the devotional and practical writings of rational and pious men; impressing himself with the views and feelings which they have entertained respecting the great subject of religion, it will tend greatly to the clearness and force of his own conceptions, to the growth of his own good affections, and by natural consequence, to his power of enlightening the minds and affecting the hearts of others. But time does not allow us even to mention all the kinds of information which it would be desirable for a minister to possess. Though he may be useful, who has not pursued his inquiries upon the most extensive scale; the more extensive it can be, the more means of

usefulness does he possess ; and though it is not expected that any one upon his entrance upon the work, have more than got into one corner of this field of knowledge, it should be his aim, both as a duty, and a pleasure, to set no bounds to his researches, but those which are fixed by the want of books and leisure, or the calls of active duty.

WHILST it is important that the christian minister be a good scholar, it is still more important that he be a good man. His own heart and life must be brought under the power of that religion, which he is to teach and inculcate to others. Delighting himself in virtue, he will find delight in endeavouring to promote it in others ; and himself devoted to God and duty, he will be active, cheerful, and constant in engaging others in the same service. A fervent spirit of devotion will infuse an engaging life into his public performances ; give a composed yet cheerful gravity to his general demeanour, and make his studies and labours light and pleasing. Superior to the undue love of the world, he will not engage in business foreign to his profession, where he can subsist without it ; nor waste his time in idle inactivity or unnecessary amusements. Thus being better enabled to break the fatal enchantments which binds mankind to the objects of time and sense ; filled with love of his fellow men in general ; and above all to that portion of them which he is appointed by Providence to conduct to everlasting happiness ; his exertions

in their cause will be ready and constant ; he will feel that to enjoy happiness is to communicate it ; to be blest is to be blest, and will be enabled to exemplify some of those evangelical virtues most opposed, yet most ornamental to human nature, moderation, catholicism, forgiveness, and condescension. I might enlarge on other divine and moral qualifications, important to the right discharge of the pastoral office ; patience to wait the success of his labours, and bear ill success ; independence to raise him above the fear of man ; zeal and constancy, prudence, and moderation. The general view we have taken of the duties and qualifications of him who performs the work of the Lord, dictates the exclamation “ who is sufficient for these things ? ” Surely none. Let none expect to reach this high standard. The world will corrupt him ; his evil inclinations and desires will seduce him : his bad habits will enslave him. He will be called into many sharp conflicts, which will not be always crowned with victory. But let not any despair, for greater is he that is with us, than they that are against us. Let the lofty eminence be ever kept in his eager and steady view. By continual efforts, with earnest prayers, let him seek to advance ; if he falls rise again, and never disheartened, tread on in the glorious path. If such be the difficult and arduous nature of the work of a christian minister, will a people suffer him to be with them with fear ? Will they add to all his other discouragements those



of their disaffection, their inconstancy and levity, their severity and harshness; their selfishness and narrowness; their indifference and inattention. Let me

SECOND, Proceed to the second thing proposed, and briefly explain and enforce the exhortation to people to see, that their minister be with them without fear."

THIS exhortation cannot mean that a people should endeavour to divest their minister of all fear whatever. "Happy is he who feareth always." There are fears which become him as a man and as a minister. He should have a proper fear of the natural evils of life, that he may guard against them; and especially of all moral evil, that he may strive to avoid it. He should fear himself, and fear the world. He should fear temptation and fear transgression. He should fear lest he be unfaithful in his sacred office; lest he handle the word of God deceitfully or carelessly, and the souls committed to him perish by his neglect. He will imitate the great apostle, if he have a reasonable fear of ill success, who said, "I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed labour in vain." But there are fears which either from the objects to which they are directed, or the violence of their degree, must injure, perhaps destroy his peace and usefulness, which a people should endeavour to mitigate or remove. It is highly desirable and important, that a minister should be without a distressing fear of the disaffection of his people, be-

cause it must damp and frustrate his exertions ; and of want, because want is not only in itself as disagreeable to him as to other men ; but because he cannot with this evil be decent in the eyes of the world, or have leisure and disembarassment to pursue his studies, or think of a helpless and needy family without a bleeding heart. He should not have a distressing fear of the censorious and bigoted temper of his people, since it discourages his freedom in communicating his views of divine truth, and checks all freedom of behaviour. If he have reason to apprehend a peculiar unsuccessfulness in his work, so that he labours in vain, and spends his strength for nought, it cuts the nerves of action, and makes his life a burden too great almost for flesh and blood to bear. These and other fears to which he is exposed, his people should endeavour, that as far as possible, he should have no reason to entertain.

By what means, let it be enquired, do they promote this desirable object ; and have their minister with them, without injurious and distracting fear ? Certainly in general, by a temper and behaviour corresponding to the relation, which he and they sustain to each other. They must entertain just sentiments about his character and office ; considering that he is not the object of any superstitious regard ; as one capable of procuring any advantages for them, not in the power of every pious christian ; and that he has not so much to do in the work of their salvation as them-

selves. They should remember that he has the same nature with themselves, is offended with what offends them ; pleased with what pleases them : He is not raised above natural feelings and desires, by religious meditations and hopes ; having as much need of easy circumstances, a good reputation, kind friends, and ordinary gratifications as any other christian. “ That he may be among them without fear,” they must not only form just opinions of his character and office ; but observe a right temper and conduct. If they will attain this object, they will show him love and respect. Love and respect will prevent uncharitable and censorious feelings, and make every labour light, every sacrifice easy. “ We beseech you brethren, saith Paul to the Thessalonians, to know them which labour among you, and are over you, and esteem them highly in love for their works sake.” “ Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labour in word and doctrine.” Whilst we disclaim any arrogant pretensions to a dominion over your faith, we may insist on the propriety of an affectionate and respectful treatment, as due not only to our feelings, but to the dignity and importance of the institution ; and whilst we condemn a reserved and distant behaviour towards a minister, every considerate person agrees with us in pronouncing licentious or profane language or behaviour in presence of a clergyman, to be as unmannerly as they are unchristian.



tian. A ministry must be useless and unsuccessful, in proportion as it is ridiculed and despised.

A DECENT and comfortable support is dictated by a desire to keep a minister without distracting fear. Whilst in several instances the alteration in the times has been considered in compensations to the profession; the very frequent neglect of the congregations in this country to raise the salaries of clergymen, in some proportion to their decreased value, appears like a very great inattention or disregard to an obligation of common justice, and fixes a stain on their moral character. Every man, in every town and parish, who has any feeling for a minister, and who enters into his situation, is sensible of the truth of this animadversion. The fact is, that it is not the literal contract, but the demands of the situation which constitute the rule of compensation to a minister; and that he may have more means of support than many of his people, and yet be very injuriously treated, and grievously embarrassed, if these means are not sufficient to support him in the reputable style of living in his profession.

A SERIOUS and regular attendance upon worship and ordinances, with some correspondence in the life to the profession, is necessary to the desirable object we are contemplating. This attendance and this decency at least of behaviour, are not only means but evidences of religion. Why is a man appointed to preach

if not to be heard ? Why to lead in worship if not to be joined ? Attendance however is not all, but attendance with a serious and inquisitive spirit, and with the fruits of it manifested by a christian temper and character. The faithful minister hopes his people will not only hear him with attention, but hear him with candor and self-application. If they are drowsy and stupid under his preaching ; if they are bigoted and censorious ; laying stress on defects of manner ; expecting entertainment rather than instruction, and novelty rather than utility : If they insist on his advancing only their tenets and using their phrases ; as though they were so infallible or so honest, that every man's mind must be tried by their own, as a true standard, and they had a monopoly of all wisdom and all goodness, his hope is disappointed ; and he cannot be with them without painful and distressing fear. He hopes that they will not hear him represent the infinite importance of religious goodness, and go away and act as if every thing else were more important ; but that they will show he has not laboured in vain, by their spirit of devotion and attendance on worship ; their works of charity and equity, their meekness and forbearance, their self-government and moderation ; their detachment from a transient and unsatisfying world ; their lively sense of divine things ; their elevation and purity of soul, and their ardent desire of advancing in the divine life.

FURTHER, the people who endeavour that their minister shall "be with them without fear," will put a fair and candid construction on his conversation and behaviour; sensible that he must have the imperfections of human nature, as well as peculiar faults and foibles of his own. Instead of proclaiming those infirmities and errors, which more or less are found in the best men, to an unmerciful world, they will draw over them the mantle of charity, and vindicate his reputation against the prejudiced, the censorious, and the rash. Exposed as he is to many a jaundiced eye, and many a babbling tongue, they will have frequent opportunities of evincing their friendship, by defending his character.

THE people we have described will share his afflictions, for he is their sympathetic friend. They will live peaceably with each other, and with him; for "where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work." Their divisions must be his grief, as well as their misery. Above all, they will not allow an unhallowed zeal to make doctrines or discipline, or any affair of the church a ball of contention. A religious quarrel is as great a contradiction in terms, as devout blasphemy or honest fraud.

LASTLY, The people we have described, will pray for their minister. Sensible of his dependence on divine aid for support and encouragement, they will bear him in the arms of pious love to the throne of grace. By their prayers they will keep alive a sense of the difficulties and



duties of his station, and feel new and continual incitements to lighten his labours, to comfort his heart, and to promote his usefulness and joy. Such is the general and imperfect view of the duties and qualifications of him, who works the work of the Lord, and of the temper and conduct on the part of his people, which may contribute to ease his mind of painful and distracting fear. What relation is more interesting and important ; and what duties are followed with more happy consequences than those which are discharged by a minister to his people, by a people to their minister.

I AM satisfied that you, my brother, feel a deep concern in this subject, and desire to be one of those ministers with whom a people “ may be without fear.” That you may gain and secure this happiness, I trust you will endeavour to be able and faithful in your sacred office ; that you will seek for knowledge as for hidden treasure ; and for gifts and graces that may make your labours pleasant and improving to yourself, and acceptable and useful to your flock. If the ministry have its reproaches and afflictions, it is not without its honors and satisfactions. If you enter into the spirit of your office, you will be able to endure its difficulties and trials ; and find that every sacrifice to its duties carries a rich reward. May you experience the accomplishment of that animating promise of the great head of the church, “ Lo I am with you always.” May you be with this people without fear, enjoying their in-

creasing affection and respect, contributing to their faith, hope, and charity ; and having done and suffered the will of God in the station allotted you by a kind providence, be received to a late and glorious reward in heaven.

CHRISTIAN friends of this church and society. We partake with you in the satisfaction of this day, and in your expectations of spiritual comfort and improvement from the minister you now receive. May he be to you “ a repairer of breaches, and a restorer of paths to dwell in”. We believe him one who will devote himself to your service ; and who ought to be with you without discouraging or distracting fear.

THAT this may be his and your happy case, you will love, honor, and support him ; consider his tender sensibilities ; attend upon his instructions ; be candid in your judgments, and reasonable in your expectations ; and “ be at peace among yourselves.” Long may you rejoice in the light of his doctrine ; and the purity of his example ; and having been united in the belief and defence, the obedience and consolation of the gospel in this world, may pastor and people be united with all the virtuous and holy, in one glorious and happy society in heaven.

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THE CHARGE;  
BY THE  
*Rev. Mr. CLARK,*  
OF LEXINGTON.

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A SOVEREIGN God, whose work is perfect, whose ways are wisdom, and whose benevolence never lost sight of the best good of his creatures, when, by the APOSTACY of mankind, the FIRST COVENANT, as it respected them, became insufficient to restore them to a state of favor and felicity, was pleased to establish a NEW COVENANT, for their redemption and restoration to virtue and happiness “ in the hand of a mediator.”

EARLY notices were given of these designs of wisdom and grace, to a sinful and perishing world of men; and frequent intimations, from time to time, were made of the coming of a mediator, to carry them to effect, under the gospel dispensation.



“ God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake unto the fathers by the prophets,” concerning this great and interesting event, “ when the fulness of the time was come, sent forth his son” into the world, who proclaimed “ peace on earth, and good will towards men,” and purchased redemption for sinners upon the terms of this NEW COVENANT, and sealed it with his blood.

Just before his ascension into heaven, our Lord announced to his disciples the powers with which he was invested, and gave them their commission and instructions, as the first ministers in his kingdom, with assurance of his presence and support to them, their successors in the ministry and the church, to the end of time. His words, on this occasion, are solemn, important and affecting: “ ALL POWER” saith Christ to his disciples, “ all power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.”

IN like manner, it is on the same principles, by the same authority, for the same purpose, and with the same commission and instructions, (what was peculiar to the time and office of the apostles only excepted) that all true ministers of Christ are introduced into the

sacred character : And, we may add, with the same assurances, of the presence and support of our common Lord and head; as an encouragement to diligence; activity and fidelity, in so arduous and difficult a work.

WHEREFORE, dear sir, as God hath raised you up, and qualified you for so important an office ; led this beloved church and society so generally to invite you to take the oversight of them in the Lord, and inclined your heart to accept their invitation ; and as you have, at this time, been publicly and solemnly separated and consecrated to the work of the ministry, by prayer and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery : We, the ministers of Christ, convened, at their request, on this solemn occasion, do, in his name, and by authority derived from him, ordain and declare you a minister of the gospel, and pastor of this church and flock of our Lord Jesus Christ, in special.—And further, that you are hereby vested equally with ourselves, with all the authority, powers and privileges, known or pointed out in the gospel, as belonging to the sacred office.

You are this day “put in trust with the gospel,” and to you it is given to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ, to administer the ordinances of divine appointment in his church, to do the work of the ministry, and to watch for souls, as one that must give an account.

THE office to which you are called, is honorable and  
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sacred. The work in which you now engage, is great and difficult, and the faithful discharge of the duties of your station, may be of everlasting consequence both to yourself and to the people of your charge. All your time, all your talents, all your diligence and attention, will be little enough to answer the just expectations of God and his people.

PERMIT US then, elder in years and experience, earnestly to exhort you, and in the presence of this great assembly, and “before God and our Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the quick and dead at his appearing and kingdom,” to CHARGE you to “take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you fulfil it.” “Preach the word ; be instant in season, and out of season ; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and doctrine.”

EVER careful to “speak the things which become sound doctrine,” you will “in doctrine shew uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, sound speech that cannot be condemned”. “Renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully ;”—“by the manifestation of the truth, you will commend yourself to every man’s conscience, in the sight of God.”

THE word of God, and THAT ALONE, being the standard of faith and practice, you will never “teach for doctrines the commandments of men,” however great



or good ; but the truth of the gospel in its native purity and simplicity ; even “ the truth as it is in Jesus.” “ Christ and him crucified.” “ Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God, unto salvation,” of them that believe in his name and obey his gospel.

“ QUESTIONS that gender strife rather than godly edifying, which is in faith,” you will studiously avoid : but the great doctrines and duties of religion, you will faithfully preach and publish. And with the holy apostle, you will more especially “ TESTIFY, both to the JEWS and also to the GREEKS”—TO ALL MEN, the necessity and importance of “ repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,” as terms of pardon, acceptance and salvation, under the gospel.

MAKING the holy scriptures your study, your guide and the man of your counsel, you can scarcely fail of declaring the whole counsel of God, and will not be in danger of keeping back any thing that may be profitable unto men.

ATTENDING to the state of the flock, you will wisely adapt yourself, both in preaching, conduct and conversation, to their temper, character, circumstances and necessities : And in all things, and at all times, be persuaded to “ study to shew yourself approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”.

IN a sacred regard to the words of our Lord to Pe-

ter, it will be your duty and delight, to “feed the sheep, and to feed the lambs” of the flock committed to your charge ; that under your ministry, both elder and younger may “grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ”, and parents and children ; all, in the end, may rise up and call you blessed !

PREACHING, however important a part of the ministerial work, will have but little effect, without a life conformable to the precepts, the spirit and genius of the gospel. Deeply impressed with a sense of the sacred nature of the doctrines and truths you preach, you will ever remember, that it becomes the PREACHER to be an “example to the believer, in faith, in charity, in spirit, in purity, and in all good works.”

YOU will administer the ordinances of the gospel, BAPTISM and the LORD’S SUPPER, to the proper subjects of them, with a reverence, humility and solemnity, becoming their sacred nature in religion, and important use in the church.

IN the discipline of Christ’s house, the church, you will make it your care to lead and preside with modesty, firmness and integrity, studiously guarding against all partiality.

I ONLY add—“The things which thou hast” this day “heard and received among many witnesses, commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to

teach others also". "Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be a partaker of other men's sins; keep thyself pure."

THIS, my Brother, is the charge given to you, out of the Holy Scriptures, on this great and solemn occasion: And to assist you in keeping it, in the words of the holy apostle, you will permit us to say unto you—"Give attendance to reading"—"Neglect not the gift that is in thee"—"Meditate on these things: give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all. Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: For in doing this, thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee."

IMPRESSED with a sense of the greatness of the work in which you are engaged, the weight of the charge you have received, and your own dependance, be persuaded, Sir, to live near to God, to make him your resort, in Christ, in every duty, in every danger and in every trial. Be much in prayer. Pray for yourself, and for the divine presence and blessing, in your studies, in your labours, and in all parts of your ministry. Pray for the people of your charge, that the word of God, and the institutions of the gospel, by you dispensed, may be effectual to their salvation and happiness. Pray for all men, that they may come to the knowledge of the truth, and be saved. In a word, by being faithful unto death, may you seek and secure a crown of life.



AND, for encouragement to fidelity and perseverance, you may rest assured, that if you keep this commandment, without spot and unrebukable, to the coming of the Lord, when the chief shepherd shall appear, you shall appear with him in glory :—And having turned many to righteousness, you shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as a star, in the kingdom of God, for ever and ever.

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THE  
RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP;

BY THE  
*Rev. Mr. CLARK,*  
OF NORTON.

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**T**HE gospel of our glorious redeemer is a system of love, admirably designed to suit the condition of fallen men, and to draw them into the practice of its amiable virtues. To promote this design in a way consistent with human feelings, ambassadors are

commissioned by the spirit of God, to proclaim the proffers and blessings of it, and to persuade mankind, if possible, to conform to it. That they may happily succeed in this work, it is highly important for their endeavours to be in UNISON, and their whole deportment to be a brilliant copy of that love they are required to inculcate upon others. There is a captivating charm emanating from a band of brothers, whose hearts appear unitedly warmed with the noblest sentiments, glowing with the purest affection, and whose individual and combined exertions are most fervently employed in propagating the most benevolent of systems. Such an affecting harmony in sentiment, design, and pursuit, must have a strong tendency to enoble their exertions, to recommend the cause they would promote, and to incline many to espouse its interest. This harmony ought ever to be conspicuous among the ambassadors of Christ. They ought not only to be cemented in heart-affection and fervent affection, but their union is to be SEALED and SOLEMNIZED by an EXTERNAL TOKEN, significant of their united ingraftment into the love of Christ, their combined engagement to promote his interest, and their mutual obligation to discharge reciprocal offices of love, counsel, and support, in the service of their common master. The gospel appellation for this token is, THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP.

As you, dear brother, have now been publicly en-

rolled among the ambassadors of Christ, it remains to seal, and solemnize our union with you by THIS APOSTOLIC CEREMONY. Therefore, in the name, and by the desire of the venerable Council, here convened, I present you THE RIGHT HAND. By this friendly token, we welcome you into the labors of the christian vineyard; embrace you as an equal partner with us in the dignities of the pastoral office; ratify our union with you in the love and fellowship of the gospel, and solemnly announce our readiness to assist, sympathize, and rejoice with you in promoting universal love and piety. As we cheerfully pledge this by the tender of OUR right hand, so YOUR ACCEPTANCE of it is, on your part, a public declaration of your readiness to afford us equal help, as occasion and circumstances require.

THE cause we are bound to promote is, that of love to God, and good will toward man. Though this work be easy and pleasant in itself; yet, through the hardness of men's hearts, it often becomes arduous, difficult, and discouraging. We need each others aid, counsel, and support. We shall do well, my brother, to embrace all opportunities to strengthen and encourage, comfort and enliven each other, while laboring through this vale of tears. As a friend, I advise you; as a brother, I entreat you, TO BE WISE AS A SERPENT, AND HARMLESS AS A DOVE. Open the eagle-eye of caution upon all; carry the melting tongue of kindness to all; practically display the unblamable image of



holiness before all. Let the fire of gospel love and piety so meliorate and inflame YOUR heart, that all your friends may catch its genial warmth, and your enemies, if such you have, may, instead of opposing, be melted into the same temper. Go forth, my brother, and the Lord be with you.

BRETHREN OF THE CHURCH, We extend the hand of affection to you, soliciting your help and support for this our brother, in performing the important duties of his trust among you. It is much in your power to soothe his cares, to ease the burden of his trials, and to strengthen him in the work of the Lord.

As a friend and neighbor, deeply interested in your christian welfare, I would press my friendly intreaties, that you would ever be ready to encourage him by expressions of love and kindness; to animate him by a lively attendance on his preaching; to magnify his office, by treating him as an ambassador of God; to remember him with the tenderest affection in your addresses to the throne of grace; and to crown his ministerial labors by a peaceful and holy walk, according to the commands and ordinances of Christ. May you both be feelingly alive to your respective duties, and finally receive of the great Shepherd, an unfading crown of everlasting glory.

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